

AMAA news

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Inauguration of the New Sanctuary of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Belgium



The new building of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Belgium

AMAA NEWS

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The Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652
Tel: (201) 265-2607; Fax: (201) 265-6015
E-mail: amaa@amaa.org
Website: www.amaa.org

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AMAA NEWS
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652
E-mail: amaanews@amaa.org

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Ebenezer/Dedication

Levon Filian

"Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer, saying thus far the Lord has been with us." 1 Samuel 7:12.

Just like in the days of Abraham, Moses, David and Samuel, as we arrive at a pivotal point in our mission, in our journey, we DEDICATE a place for a cause, and make it a point of reference and give the glory to God.

How true this is in the life of the AMAA mission field as we dedicate and name special places, wherein we will be able to educate people and preach the gospel.

Within the last few months we have named and dedicated a number of places of worship and education. Here is the list:

We dedicated a Church in Brussels, Belgium

We dedicated a Church Hall in Yerevan, Armenia

We dedicated a Day Center in Yerevan, Armenia

We dedicated a Day Center in Vanadzor, Armenia

We dedicated a Building in Beirut, Lebanon

We dedicated a School Hall in Beirut, Lebanon

We dedicated a Building in Beit Mery, Lebanon

We dedicated the permit to renovate a Christian Camp in Beit Mery

We dedicated an IT Classroom in Beirut, Lebanon

And we say, "thus far" the Lord has helped us.

It is a proclamation of God's abundant blessings and His guidance in our mission field from the past to the present. Yes, we acknowledge the fact that the AMAA had a vision and mission to serve God; that we got financial assistance from generous donors; we had the prayer support of many believers; and all of these helped in the success of all these accomplishments. However, we continue to proclaim that "All good things come from God." We must learn from Nebuchadnezzar's mistake when he proclaimed "look what I built" as he completed the construction of Babylon and the consequences that followed.

We must and we will continue to proclaim that "All good things come from God" and give Him all the glory.

"Thus far" means the mission is not yet complete! It is not the end. There is a plan and a promise for the future. There is hope and encouragement. We move forward with the assurance that the God in whom we believe will continue to guide us and help us prosper if we continue to trust Him, obey Him and give Him all the glory. We look forward to greater blessings. Though there may be trials and tribulations, struggles, defeats and victories, we must move forward with the assurance in His promise when He says, *I will never leave you, and I will never forsake you, I will be with you to the end.* (Deuteronomy 31:6)

We thank all those who participated in the success stories mentioned above. We welcome every one to join us in praising God for His abundant blessings, for all the Ebenezers and the Dedications "thus far" and we invite you to be part of our ministry henceforth with your prayers and participation in our ministries around the world. □



Armenian Evangelical Church of Belgium Inaugurates New Sanctuary

April 13, 2013 was an historic day for the Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels. On this day, the official inauguration of the Church's new home at Heizelstraat 20-1020 Brussels took place.

The Sanctuary was filled to capacity with many people standing during the service. The ceremony started with the 'Hayr Mer' (the Lord's Prayer) and prayers in Armenian and French. The Senior Pastor of the Church, Rev. Sarkis Pachaian, welcomed the guests and praised God for making it possible for the Church in Brussels to have its own Sanctuary. "We prayed and we waited for many years for this day" he said, "and we thank all those who contributed to the realization of this project for His glory." On behalf of the Church, he extended special thanks to the AMAA, the Armenian Evangelical Union of France and to all the other churches worldwide for their financial and moral support to make possible the realization of the Church building project, where members can come, worship and hear the Good News of salvation.

Present at the inauguration were Rev. Joel Mikaelian, President of the World Council of Churches and the Armenian Evangelical Union of France, Rev. Gilbert Leonian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship of Europe, Rev. Rene Leonian, President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia, Levon Filian, Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Rev. John van der Dussen, representing the Synode Fédéral des Eglises Evangéliques et Protestantes of Belgium, as well as representatives of different communities, churches and organizations.

The Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels was officially founded in 1991 and has about 300 members in Belgium, mainly



L to R: Yura & Anoush Alexanian, and Levon & Liliana Filian



Rev. Sarkis Pachaian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Belgium, welcomes the guests.

composed of Armenians from Turkey and Armenians from Armenia. The Church has been a member of the Federal Synod of Evangelical and Protestant Churches in Belgium for several years.

We praise the Lord for this new church Sanctuary and pray that it will be a source of blessing for both Armenians and non-Armenians living in Belgium. □

AMAA Executive Director Visits Greece

Rev. Vicken Cholakian*

In the last two years, Greece has been under the spotlight. With its economical crisis escalating day by day, the population is suffering, especially those who moved here in the last 20 years from different parts of the world, with the hope of finding a better life.

During the long weekend of April 17-21, the Armenian Evangelical Church in Kokkinia, Greece had the joy and honor of having Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, and his wife Liliana pay a visit. On the evening of their arrival the women of the church organized their Lenten (Mitchink, following the Greek calendar) meal. Before the meal they had an opportunity to meet with the Armenian priests of Athens, from

both prelaties, Cilicia and Etchmiadzin. In subsequent days, we had extensive talks covering the history and the present situation of the Armenian communities at large and the Armenian Evangelical community and their ministries and activities. We had an opportunity to visit the Armenian Ambassador to Athens, His Excellency Gagik Ghalachian at the Embassy in Athens. After introducing him to the ministry of the AMAA especially in Armenia, the Ambassador spoke of the difficulties of the Armenians in Greece. We also visited the Bishop Khoren Doghramadjian of Cilicia at their Prelacy. There too we discussed the issues that the Armenian Community faces in Greece.

We also had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Hovig Demirjian, former AMAA Representative and his wife, Ani, to discuss our mission field. A brief meeting was held with the Armenian Catholic priest and the Chairman of the "Hayastan" All Armenian Fund - Greece affiliate, Dr. Vatché Der Garabedian.

At the home of the Chairman of the Committee of the church, Mr. & Mrs. Hovig Nercessian, we had a long discussion on different issues of our church and the kindergarten, the present and the future plans and possibilities of new ministries.

At the Sunday service, Mr. Filian presented the activities of the AMAA and also delivered a message in memory of April 24, the Armenian Genocide.

After the service, we participated in the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide organized by the two Armenian political parties and sponsored by the Greek



L to R: Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director, Ambassador Gagik Ghalachian and Rev. Vicken Cholakian



L to R: Sylva Nercessian, Levon and Liliana Filian, Rev. Vicken Cholakian and Hovig Nercessian



L to R: Rev. Vicken Cholakian, Levon Filian, Dr. Hovig and Ani Demirjian

government. After the commemoration, the scouts and dignitaries and all the participants marched to the Parliament at the tomb of the unknown soldier where different representatives, both Greek and Armenian, placed laurels.

We as a church, appreciate the ministry of the AMAA and once more we felt the closeness and friendship through the visit of Mr. & Mrs. Levon Filian. □

* Rev. Vicken Cholakian is the Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Athens, Greece.



L to R: Fr. Nareg Kahana Shahinian (Priest of St. Hovhanou Garabed Church in Neos Kosmos), Fr. Baret Khatcherian (Priest of St. Hagop Church in Kokkinia), Levon Filian, Rev. Vicken Cholakian and Fr. Khoren Arakelian (Vicar of the Diocese of the Armenian Church)



Armenian Evangelical Kindergarten of Kokkinia, Greece.

AMAA Executive Director Meets With The Leadership of AEUF, Hope for Armenia, SEL and UMAF of France

While in France, April 5-7, Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, had several meetings with the leadership of the Armenian Evangelical Union of France (AEUF), Hope for Armenia (HA), Service d'Entraide Liason (SEL) and the Union Medicale Armenien de France (UMAF).

Meeting with the Armenian Evangelical Union of France

Rev. Joel Mikaelian, President of AEUF, gave a summary of the blessings and challenges facing their Union. He mentioned that the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France have mostly been financially self-sufficient over the decades. Yet, the AMAA has helped in times of need, for which he expressed his appreciation. Rev. Gilbert Leonian mentioned the work in the following European countries: France, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, Germany and Bulgaria. Cyprus also needs to join. The Armenian Evangelical churches and fellowships of these countries formed the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship of Europe in 1998. This was inspired and encouraged by Rev. Movses Janbazian, former Executive Director of the AMAA.

Meeting with the Board of Hope for Armenia

The AMAA and Hope for Armenia (HA) have been in partnership since the early 1990s, when the two organizations started their active ministry in Armenia. The meeting was attended by HA Board members. Rev. Joel Mikaelian presented the 20 year history of HA and its mission. He stressed the importance of HA for the Armenian Evangelical Union of France, as its mission arm. He stressed that HA values its partnership with the AMAA. Both organizations pursue the same objectives and operate on the same principles.



Seated L to R: Boros Halajian (Executive Director of Hope for Armenia), Rev. Joel Mikaelian (VP Hope for Armenia), Levon Filian and Harout Nercessian. **Standing L to R:** HA Board members Serge Kurkjian, Stephanie Darcourt, Franck Garabedian, Sylvia Topouzkhania, David Chahinian and Rev. Gilbert Leonian

Meeting with Service d'Entraide Liason (SEL)

The meeting was attended by SEL Director Patrick Guiborat, SEL staff Patricia Coulmy and Ann Hatava, HA Board members, Levon Filian and Harout Nercessian. SEL has been in partnership with the AMAA and HA since the 1990s, in the Child Sponsorship program. They find sponsors and provide the link between the sponsors and the AMAA Yerevan office.



Seated L to R: Boros Halajian, Rev. Joel Mikaelian, Levon Filian and Patrick Guiborat (SEL Director). **Standing L to R:** David Chahinian, Franck Garabedian, Stephanie Darcourt, Patricia Coulmy (SEL Armenia Sponsorship), Ann Hatava (SEL Sponsorship Director), Harout Nercessian, Sylvia Topouzkhania and Serge Kurkjian

Meeting with UMAF

Union Medicale Armenien de France (UMAF) partners with HA and the AMAA in the funding and operation of the dental and pediatric clinic in Spitak, Armenia.



L to R: Harout Nercessian, Serge Kurkjian, Dr. Georges Mosditchian (President of UMAF), Levon Filian and George Kasparian (Secretary Hope for Armenia)

The Hilfsbund Foundation, the Help Alliance

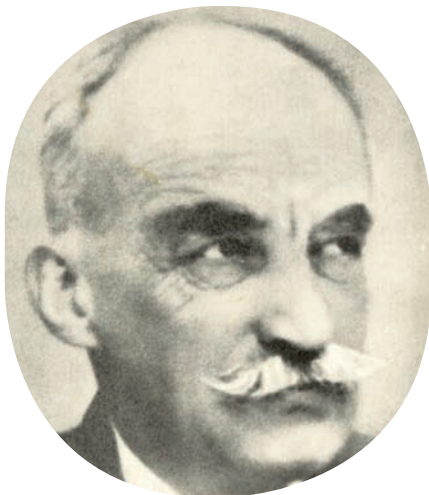
A Story of Christian Love: A Samaritan Story of Conviction, Compassion, Commitment

Levon Filian

"I am convinced that the Armenian people are one of the most talented and most efficient in the whole world. This nation has a distinct and powerful task in the East. It is intended to be a priestly nation, a nation that would bring the great thoughts of God into the world of Oriental people. This is God's plan and God's will — and only when the Armenian nation realizes its real and God given tasks, it will be led in the right path."

These words were written by the German missionary who had worked with and among the Armenian people in Turkey for 25 years. "Only by conviction there is devotion," said the founder of the German Help Alliance and the Swiss Help Alliance in Germany in 1896. His name was Ernst Lohmann, a German Pastor from Frankfurt, Germany.

Ernst Lohmann was the son of a pastor, studied to become a pastor and served as a pastor in Frankfurt, Germany. In 1894,



Ernst Lohmann

when he was 34 years old, he read about the terrible massacres taking place in Zeitun and other Armenian towns and villages, and about the plans that Sultan Abdul Hamid had to exterminate the Armenians. Although Germany was an ally with Turkey and the German press was silent about the massacres, Lohmann took upon himself to bring awareness to the German public by publishing a weekly news magazine "For All" where on February 2, 1896 he wrote an article "Armenians Cry for Distress." His publications woke up the conscience of German Christians. A troop of courageous Christians traveled to the "Land of Blood and Tears" to eyewitness the tragedies and provide needed help. They preached the Gospel of peace and the love of God and provided spiritual revival. In their ministry to the Armenians, the missionaries had an opportunity to witness to the Kurds and Turks. For example, in 1932 and 1933, 25 Turks and Kurds became Christians in Marash.

The Hilfsbund Foundation started in Frankfurt. It later expanded to France in 1923, under ACO Action Chretienne en Orient, and in

1937 to Zurich, Switzerland. The Foundation operates independently and cooperatively as German Hilfsbund, Swiss Hilfsbund and ACO from France, each with its own Board of Directors.

Indeed it was a blessing for me to meet with former Board President Rev. Willi-Hermann Merten, the President of the Swiss Board Dr. Werner Steube, and the current Executive Director of the German Board Dr. Andreas Baumann and several Swiss and German Hilfsbund Board members in April, 2013. I was able to pay a personal visit and thank the people to whom I had written many letters as a child, calling them "dear sponsor" and thanking them for their prayers, financial assistance and the clothing they sent us.

Come, join me, to read how the Hilfsbund Foundation helped the Armenian people in so many ways, only because they loved the Lord. As you read, please visualize these missionaries, how on bended knee, in their prayers, they received a calling from God to risk their lives in order to preach about His love, and touch someone in need, to tell them that God has not forsaken them. Join me to hear the cry of men and women being killed, raped and tortured! Join me to visualize the children taken away from their parents by force, in orphanages, who were grateful to have a shelter, a meal, be with a total stranger who held them in their arms and loved them and prayed with them and comforted them. I welcome you to look beyond the statistics and numbers and move to the personal touch and the spiritual aspect of this mission field. Come, join me, to count your blessings, move from knowing what you should do, to doing what you are called to do. May God bless you in your future plans in serving Him.

Here is a brief story of how the Hilfsbund Foundation and its members served God.

Historic Armenia/Turkey

From 1896 to 1920, the help alliance had helped the Armenians in the following towns and cities:

Kharpert and Mesere: 5 orphanages with schools, over 700 orphans, one preacher school, one teacher seminary.

Marash: one hospital, two orphanages with schools, one Bible school for women.

Harunje Mush and Van: In each of these cities they had one orphanage for boys and one orphanage for girls with workshops and trade schools. In other towns, workshops for shoe making, tailoring, weaving, bakery, pottery, etc. were held. In 1908, they had 50 men and women/sister missionaries and 175 native Armenian coworkers taking care of over 2,000 orphans in 20 orphanages. They provided assistance to orphanages and schools in **Aintab**, and **Attabey** for 4 years, **Bebek**, 9 years, **Bitlis** 10 years, **Diarbekir** 2 years, **Hadjin** 3 years, **Malatia** and **Mush** 10 years, **Palu** 3 years, **Sivas** 7 years, **Skutar** 2 years, and **Urfa** 4 years.

Syria: 1915-1917, 1956-1958

The mission work of the Hilfsbund Foundation in Aleppo is revealed in "The Life of Rohner," written by Hans-Lukas Kieser.

Sister Beatrice Rohner, who grew up in Basel, Switzerland, had been a teacher in Paris, then in Istanbul, and in 1900 moved to



Sister Beatrice Rohner

Marash to work for the Hilfsbund Orphanage in Bethel. She worked in Aleppo where the second phase of the Armenian Genocide was taking place in concentration camps. Thousands of Armenians had become victims of hunger, starvation and illness. Here she began to take care of about 1,000 Armenian orphans. She was described as a woman of gentleness and humility, full of compassion. She was also a woman of great persuasion, and was able to convince influential people like Jemal Pasha, one of the so called triumvirates heading the Young Turks, and General von Kressenstein, Director of the Bagdad Railway construction in Aleppo, to keep the orphanages open.

Sister Beatrice was able to work with American, Swiss and German missionaries to raise funds for the starving Armenians and found the means to report the misery that took place in camps. She met and worked with Hovhannes Eskijian, ABCFM Dr. Fred Shepar, Sisag Manugian, Anna Jensen, and missionaries from the Near East Relief. She worked with and wrote about the German Consul Walter Rossler and American Consul Jesse Jackson. These were men who had their hearts in the right place. Harassed by Turkish officers, she had to move the orphanages three times within a few days. She vehemently fought with Turkish authorities who wanted to move

Armenian orphans to Turkish orphanages or give them for adoption to Turkish families to assimilate them to Muslim Turks.

In one of her letters she writes that the Turkish government took 70 boys from the orphanage and sent them to a Muslim orphanage to Aintoura, Lebanon, which was run by the Turkish government. Sister Beatrice, under stress, had a nervous breakdown and was sent to Germany. She returned to Aleppo in 1919 to pay tribute to Rev. Eskijian whom she described as a man who died without fear, and a man who was able to serve his people.

At times, she argued, that despite everything the God of love had not been completely absent. Then she asked what held the enemy back. To this she answered, "the enemy did not know, but, we knew that when we prayed together and we spoke of our utter helplessness to God, our prayers were answered."

She was inspired by the Bible, paying attention to the Letter of Hebrews and the Heroes of Faith, whom she compared with the Armenians. Her favorite verse from the Bible was "no man has greater love than to give his life for his friends." John 15:13

Bulgaria: 1920-1939/1944

The Hilfsbund Foundation did not stop there. Rather, right after the Turkish atrocities, it continued its mission serving the Armenian people who had fled to the cities of Varna, Seres, Haskovo, Sophia, and Philippopolis/Plovdiv in Bulgaria starting its mission there in late 1896. Here we meet Sister Hanna, who was sent as a missionary in 1926 serving as a missionary in Plovdiv and Schumen among the Armenians. We later see her serving in Anjar, Lebanon. In Varna alone there were 5,900 Armenian refugees who had fled from Turkey. The Hilfsbund Foundation played an important role in the development of the Armenian Evangelical churches and communities in Bulgaria.

In 1935, the Foundation had 25 missionaries who worked among the Armenians and 19 missionaries, some of whom were Armenian, who worked among the Muslims in Bulgaria.

Greece and Cyprus: 1920- 1949

The Foundation continued to follow the Armenian refugees who fled to Greece. In 1927, Sister Marie Rock, a Bible school graduate and a trained midwife, was sent to Kavalla/Govolla, a seaport in

Continued on following page...



With German Hilfsbund leadership - L to R: Christians Blaser, Rev. Willi-Hermann Merten, Levon & Liliana Filian and Dr. Andreas Baumann



With Swiss Mission Board - L to R: Sr. Elisabeth Kaeser, Emil Gafner, Dr. Werner Steube and Levon Filian.

"God's Mission, Our Mission"

Theme of Pastors Retreat in France

Organized by The Armenian Evangelical World Council of Churches, a Pastors Retreat was held April 8-12 at the La Source Camp of the Armenian Evangelical Union of France in Evian, France. About 60 Armenian Evangelical Pastors from North America, Eurasia, France, Armenia and the Middle East participated. The theme of the Retreat was "God's Mission, Our Mission" and the main speaker was Rev. Ben Peterson, a Presbyterian minister from the United States. Rev. Peterson has served as Chaplain at many colleges in the United States and has authored several books.

The Retreat began with a Worship Service conducted by Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Pastor to Pastors in Armenia, who welcomed the participants and presented the week's program.

Rev. Peterson presented a different message to the pastors each day. These messages, which were based on Bible verses, included courage, prayer, joy, reflection and our real life.

During the five-day Retreat, the pastors also had group discussions and prayers. The Retreat concluded with a special Worship Service and Communion. All the participants felt the blessings of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Retreat was also a special occasion for the pastors to fellowship with each other and an opportunity of renewal and fellowship with Jesus.

May God continue to bless all the churches and pastors in their mission. ☐



Continued from previous page...

Greece, to serve among the Armenian Christians where she served until the end of WWII. In 1949 she went to Anjar, Lebanon where she served until 1967.

In 1933 she was joined by Sister Hedwig, a nurse and midwife, to help the Armenian refugees. She served there for 14 years. In

1947 she went to Anjar where she served until 1972. They also sponsored 2 schools/orphanages, and 2 clinics in Salonika.

Stay tuned – In the next issue of the AMAA News, there will be more about the Foundation's mission work in Lebanon and Armenia.

Challenge!

For now, the AMAA needs your prayers and support to help keep the boarding school in Anjar, Lebanon open, and take care of about 100 students who are under Christian supervision and care 24/7. The students live in a safe haven, are fed three meals a day and receive spiritual and academic guidance preparing them for Christian leadership.



Ceremony Dedicates Izmirlian Building at KCHAG

On April 27 the KCHAG (Armenian Evangelical Christian Endeavor Summer Camp) Renovation Committee organized a ceremony dedicated to the unveiling of a special plaque, naming one of the renovated buildings as the Izmirlian Building, in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Shimavon and Loucia Izmirlian. This was made possible by a generous donation from Mr. & Mrs. Asadour and Audrey Izmirlian of the UK.

Participating in this ceremony were Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE), Levon Filian, Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, Chair of the Central Committee of the UAECNE and President of Haigazian University, Garbis Deyirmenjian, Chair of the Renovation Committee, and Tony Maroun, Mayor of the Beit Meri, Ain Saade region. Also attending the ceremony were AMAA Board members, Haigazian University Board members, pastors, community members and friends.

After the welcome and prayer of dedication, Ms. Ovsanna Izmirlian, representing her brother Asadour, spoke about the dedication and exemplary life of her parents, and then unveiled the plaque.

Following the reception, Mayor Maroun expressed his joy that KCHAG was being renovated and hoped that the return of KCHAG would also mean a closer connection of the youth with the Lord through children's, youth, and women's camps, retreats, visits and worship services. He then handed Rev. Karagoezian the official renovation permit of the whole land of KCHAG. Mr.



L to R: Garbis Deyirmenjian, Levon Filian, Mayor Tony Maroun, Ovsanna Izmirlian and Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian

Filian then recalled old memories from KCHAG 50 years ago. He spoke about the fundraising efforts of the AMAA toward the renovation of KCHAG, and reflected on the importance of camp ministries where many young people come to accept Christ in their lives.

After the dedication ceremony, the guests toured the facilities and completed their tour of the newly renovated chapel by glorifying God in hymns of praise. □

→ The Stephen Philibosian Hall at Shamlan Tatigian School

The Hall in the school building of the Armenian Evangelical Shamlan Tatigian Secondary School in Beirut has a name now: it is called the Stephen Philibosian Hall.

On April 23, 2013 and in the presence of Mrs. Joyce Stein, Stephen Philibosian's daughter and the President of the Philibosian Foundation, an opening ceremony was held in the newly named Hall. In attendance were Mr. Joseph Stein, Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, Mr. and Mrs. Levon Filian, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kurkjian, students and teachers, and members of the Parents' Committee.

The Principal of the School, Vartoug Balekjian, welcomed the guests and explained that the Hall was being named "Stephen Philibosian" in appreciation of the royal donations of the Foundation in 1996-1997, as well as its ongoing annual support. She also congratulated Mrs. Stein on the occasion of receiving the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. A student choir sang a hymn of praise. Then Mrs. Stein spoke and remembered her father as a philanthropist and supporter of education.

The ceremony was concluded with Mr. Filian's prayer of dedication. Refreshments and friendly chats followed the ceremony. □



L to R: Joe & Joyce Stein and Vartoug Balekjian

Haigazian University Board Meets

Funds Raised for Scholarship - Aharonian Building Named

Mira Yardemian*

On April 26 and 27, members of the Haigazian University Board of Trustees from the United States and Lebanon held their Annual Meeting in Beirut, Lebanon.

During the two-day meetings, the Board listened to reports presented by the President, the deans and department heads. Board members also visited various buildings and facilities at the University, and had interaction with students, staff and faculty on this special occasion. Haigazian President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian thanked the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) for its generous donation for the new IT Lab.



The Board of Trustees of Haigazian University



L to R: Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, Julie Aharonian, Dr. H. Steven Aharonian and Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian

Aharonian Building Named

The Board also witnessed the naming of the new "Aharonian Building," formerly the Mugar Annex, in memory of the late Rev. Hovhannes Aharonian. President Haidostian shared with the audience the un-

wavering input and efforts of Rev. Aharonian toward establishing the University in the early 1950s and during his long years of service as the President of the UAECNE. He further thanked the subsequent donation of his son, former AMAA President and current Haigazian Board member Dr. H. Steven Aharonian. Emotionally touched, Dr. Aharonian recalled his father and the passion he had for education. He then unveiled the mosaic, along with his wife Julie, President Haidostian, and the Chair of the University

Board of Trustees Dr. Ani Darakjian. Also present at the ceremony were the President of the Supreme Council of the Evangelical Churches in Syria and Lebanon Rev. Selim Sahyouni, President of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East

(UAEACNE) Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian, the Representative of H.H. Aram I Arch. Norair Achekian, as well as Board members, faculty and staff.

Gala Banquet Raises Scholarship Funds

The Gala Banquet attended by over 200 guests took place on April 26 at "Le Maillon" Restaurant, where \$135,000 was raised for scholarship funds. The beautiful evening was emceed by Trustee John Sagherian.

In his address, President Haidostian highlighted the importance of scholarships, as "a way of shaping a better future." He appreciated and thanked all donors, pointing out that these scholarships are matched with "an educational experience based on nurturing, love, openness, dialogue and opportunities to be elevated from securing a degree to securing clean hearts, sound minds, and cultivated skills."

Armenian Ambassador to Lebanon H.E. Ashod Kocharian expressed his heartfelt

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The Lebanese Rocket Society "Avant Première"

Mira Yardemian*

The avant première of the documentary film, *The Lebanese Rocket Society: The Strange Tale of the Lebanese Space Race*, by Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige was held on April 9 at the Metropolis Empire Sofil in Ashrafieh. The film was awarded Best Feature Documentary at the Doha Tribeca Film Festival 2012 "in recognition of its immense efforts of research and its ability to build a dream."

In attendance were Minister Chakib Kortbawi, Members of Parliament Jean Oghasabian and Shant Chinchinian, Armenian Ambassador Ashot Kocharian, President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East Rev. Megrditch Karageozian, Haigazian University President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, LAU President Dr. Joseph Jabbara, and Bourj Hammoud Municipality Mayor Antranig Messerlian.

Haigazian University Public Relations Director Mira Yardemian gave a brief introduction to the 1960's project that was the Arab World's first foray into space travel.

"This 'unbelievable and surrealistic' journey that began with a group of Haigazian students and Mathematics Professor Manoug Manougian evolved into a national treasure. The movie retells this forgotten page of Lebanese history through 'eye-witness accounts and archival images,'" said Yardemian.

Dr. Haidostian then offered his welcoming remarks and warmly recalled the University's 50th anniversary in 2004, where the Rocket Society was highlighted, and was attended by General Yusef Wehbi, an integral member of the rocket project, who recently passed away. He later conveyed his gratitude and acknowledged the great effort that went into producing this film, welcoming to the podium Joana and Khalil. Armenian Canadian actress and producer Arsiné Khanjian, who had flown to Lebanon for this occasion, was invited to present the directors with a token of appreciation.



L to R: Khalil Joreige, Joana Hadjithomas, Dr. Manoug Manougian, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian

There was a special appearance by the guest of honor, Professor Manoug Manougian, who made the trip from Florida to be here for the first time in 47 years. As one of the founders of the Rocket Society, Professor Manougian shared some of his experiences, recalling how his dreams of space travel began.

Professor Manougian challenged everyone to believe in the power of imagination which has no boundaries. He then received the Haigazian University Distinguished Scholar Award from President Haidostian. □

Haigazian University..... Continued from previous page



thanks and appreciation to the role Haigazian University plays in the Armenian Diaspora. He proudly quoted some gratifying words from the President of the Armenian Republic Serge Sarkissian during his visit and encoun-

ter with Haigazian students in November 2012.

The attendees had a chance to watch a short documentary on the University, featuring current and graduate students'



impressions of Haigazian University, as well as listening to alumna Rita Lao Manjilikian sharing her unique experience at Haigazian University. □

*Haigazian University PR Director

LA Children Help Raise Funds For Armenia Children

Arsine Phillips

The Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel was adorned with beautiful butterflies for the AMAA Orphan and Child Care Luncheon and Children's Fashion Show on April 13, where the theme was "Children Helping Children Spread Their Wings."

Luncheon Co-Chairs Joyce Stein and her daughter Tina Segel welcomed the guests and introduced the vivacious emcee for the day, Araksya Karapetyan, anchor for KTTV Fox 11. The Co-chairs worked tirelessly to make every aspect of the Luncheon enjoyable for the guests. Kyle Kevorkian, grandson of AMAA Board member Ken Kevorkian, had been to Armenia in the last year and gave a moving devotional about his experience there.

The Ballroom looked spectacular with beautiful bird cage centerpieces that were overflowing with flowers generously donated by Zareh David Ghoukassian of David Z. Design in Beverly Hills. Jessica Vartoughian once again donated the wonderful favor bags full of Jessica Cosmetics products for

each guest! All of our guests were thrilled with their gifts!

There were many wonderful items available to bid on at the Silent Auction which was tremendously successful! Paulette Geragos and Leslie Kevorkian, Silent Auction Co-Chairs, and their wonderful committee, procured many amazing items, including incredible jewelry, beautiful Lalique and Waterford pieces, many children's toys, dining certificates, and much more. Argine Jean Kelegian and Christine Minasian made the Auction room look absolutely breathtaking.

Following the lunch, Lisa Karamardian spoke about her recent trip to Armenia and encouraged everyone to sponsor a needy child and make a difference in their lives. A video was shown describing the poor and substandard conditions where many children live. Tina Segel said "our committee is so excited to help the needy children and their families in Armenia and Karabagh."

After a delicious dessert with beautiful edible butterflies, the Children's Fashion Show was introduced by Ani Zakari, who

along with Marilyn Bezdikian and Caroline Tufenkian, coordinated this year's Show. The Fashion Show was sponsored and produced by Nordstrom Glendale. The Nordstrom Glendale team, along with the committee, worked tirelessly to make the Fashion Show a huge success and to make sure the presentation of more than fifty children and teenagers in the show was seamless.

This year, Jessica Vartoughian's granddaughter, Alia Shamsi, opened the Fashion Show and walked down the runway with her father. Nordstrom was thanked for its long time partnership and participation in this year's event which is very much appreciated. As a special surprise at the end of the Fashion Show, Hoy Lari entertained the audience with a wonderful performance! Assistance with the video presentation of the Fashion Show was expertly coordinated by Julia Aghishian, who oversaw all technical, sound and lighting for the event.

Finance and Reservations Chair Sandra Kalemkarian was thanked for her tremendous contribution toward the success of the event by making sure the reservations and Silent Auction are run efficiently and accurately. She works tirelessly every year to seamlessly close out the Auction. "We are grateful for every donation and sponsorship we receive," explained Sandra. "This was the third year we had an enormous crowd. We are grateful to all our guests who come every year to support the needy children in Armenia."

In closing, Lori Muncherian and Arsine Phillips, West Coast Co-chairs of the Committee, thanked the chairs, the entire committee and the donors for their continued support of this event for the children in Armenia. Many children in Armenia lack the basic necessities — food, clothing and shelter. "We are giving hope for a better future, one child at a time," explained Elizabeth Agbabian, who along with Savey Tufenkian and Mary Najarian, has worked on this very worthy program since the 1988 earthquake in Armenia. □



Members of the Los Angeles area Orphan & Child Care Committee.

Merdinian School Honors Two Major Donors At 31st Annual Banquet

The Board of Directors of C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School, located in Sherman Oaks, CA, held its 31st Annual Banquet on April 7 at the Kalaydjian Hall of St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, Burbank, CA. The Banquet Committee, co-chaired by Louisa Janbazian and Rita Meneshian, worked hard to organize a pleasant and most enjoyable evening. The joy of belonging to the Merdinian family and contributing to a worthy cause was evident in all those who were present at the Banquet.

This year's Banquet was different from the past years, as all the participants in the program were either alumni or current students of the School. Although they were not professionals, their performance caused even more joy to all those who were present.

After the welcoming words of Banquet Co-Chair Rita Meneshian and the National Anthems of the United States and Armenia, Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian of the Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, CA offered the invocation.

Two alumni of Merdinian School, Vart Derdefterian and Adrina Kassabian who served as Master of Ceremonies, introduced Lina Arslanian, the new School Principal. Mrs. Arslanian, welcomed the guests, thanked all those who worked hard to organize the Banquet and spoke briefly about the recent accomplishments of the School. An impressive powerpoint about the past and present life of the School, prepared by faculty member Fred Sayatian, was presented and narrated by the Master of Ceremonies.

The highlight of the Banquet was the honoring of two major donors, who were introduced by Dr. Vahe Nalbandian, Chairman of the Board. Mr. and Mrs. Albert and Terry Bezjian were honored for their generous donation of \$1,000,000 which will be used to build the second floor of the administrative offices and Mr. & Mrs. George and Vivian Lousararian were honored for their \$100,000 donation which will be used for the operating expenses of the School. Both honorees were presented with a special plaque from the Board.

Following the dinner, Dr. Nalbandian introduced two more people who were honored for their special contributions to the School. Jack Muncherian was honored for his services installing the computer networking system, and Ashken Ispendjian, who is officially retiring this year, was honored for her 30 years of faithful service as head of the Armenian Department.

Current students and two alumni of the School entertained the guests with music, recitations of Armenian poems and verses from the book of Proverbs and special Armenian group and solo dances.

Rev. Dr. John Khanjian concluded the most enjoyable evening with his Benediction. □



L to R: Lina Arslanian, Albert and Terry Bezjian, Dr. Vahe Nalbandian, Vivian and George Lousararian



L to R: Honoree Ashken Ispendjian and Dr. Vahe Nalbandian

AMAA NEWS is going GREEN

The AMAA NEWS is now available for our members to read online. Provide your e-mail address and the AMAA will send you a copy of the AMAA NEWS via e-mail. This link will give you the news as soon as it is available without waiting for publication.

We encourage you to let us know if you are interested in receiving the AMAA NEWS online. Please just send your e-mail address to us at amaanews@amaa.org or call us at 201.265.2607.

Thank you for helping the AMAA go GREEN!

Silvia Tchakmakjian Receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor

Mary Najarian*

If you've met Silvia Tchakmakjian or have heard of her, you would say her life story is a Fairy Tale – that of a young, attractive 17-year old girl who came to the United States with her parents and three siblings.

In 1947, the Tchakmakjian couple, Haigaz and Takoohi, took their new born baby Silvia and migrated from Lebanon to Armenia for a better life. Three months after their arrival in Armenia, Haigaz was sent to Siberia for hard labor for being an outspoken dissenter. Takoohi was left behind to raise Silvia.

Takoohi and baby Silvia alone suffered a lot. Many nights they went to bed hungry. After her father's release from Siberia, Silvia's family returned to Beirut and later settled in California. By then the family had grown and there were four children.

At age 17, ambitious young Silvia went to school during the day and in the evenings she worked as a seamstress in the garage. That little workshop in the garage, with one sewing machine is now SILVIA'S COSTUMES, INC., a thriving company that works with top designers and occupies an entire block on Hollywood Blvd. in Hollywood, CA, employing hundreds of workers. Her clients include Janet Jackson,

Cher, Queen Latifa, Jennifer Lopez, and Katy Perry to name a few. She creates costumes for television, movies, Las Vegas productions and major cruise lines such as Princess, Royal Caribbean and Holland America.

Despite her overwhelming success, Silvia still reminisces about her one room apartment and the nights she would go hungry and sleep on the floor. "Under the circumstances we still had a very happy childhood with our extended family," she says. "We took care of each other." She often quotes her "Dedé" (grandfather), who she says was her role model.

"My grandfather who lived with us was a very wise man. He would start the day with prayers and blessings. He would give us advice in the form of quotes – some he had made up and some that were passed to him by his elders."

She is the founder of Garni Foundation and a benefactor of the Armenian Prelacy Church. In the past three years she sent ten 20 ft. containers of clothing to the AMAA and Hye Geen in Armenia.

On May 11, 2013, Silvia was honored in New York with the very prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor for her fairy tale success story here in America



Silvia Tchakmakjian, recipient of the 2013 prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor

and for her dedication in helping the needy both in her adopted country and in her homeland. □

**Mary Najarian, wife of Dr. Vartkes Najarian, is a founding member and the first Co-Chair of the AMAA's Orphan and Child Care Committee. Dr. Vartkes and Mary Najarian are the founders of the Medical Outreach for Armenia Organization and are major supporters of AMAA's mission programs in Armenia.*

On March 1, Rev. Joseph Matossian, Minister to the AEUNA, Dr. Joseph Zeronian, President of the AMAA, Dr. H. Steven Aharonian, former President of the AMAA, and Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, paid a friendly visit to Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, in Burbank, CA.



AMAA Sunday Services Held on the East & West Coasts

We want to thank the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus and the Armenian Presbyterian Church in New York City for their support of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Mission.

On May 5, it was AMAA Sunday at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus. AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian gave both the Armenian and English messages. He had a powerpoint presentation during the church service which highlighted the AMAA's many projects. He thanked the congregation for its support and challenged them to continue praying for the AMAA mission field in 24 countries and especially for our brothers and sisters in Syria. Tigran Melkonian, AMAA Sponsorship Supervisor, and AMAA Board member Anita Buchakjian were available during the coffee hour to discuss the Avedisian School project, Child Sponsorship and the Granny Projects. We thank all the participants and pray that God will abundantly bless them and their loved ones.

AMAA Sunday was held at the Armenian Evangelical Church in New York City on May 19. Executive Director Levon Filian brought the Armenian message. He gave a brief report about what the AMAA is doing in Armenia, Russia and Belgium and how non-Armenian missionaries continue to help the Armenians to this day around

the world. He thanked Peter Kougasian, a Church member, who has served on the AMAA Board for many years and is the Vice President and the Co-Chair of the Armenia Committee.

The Church hosted a coffee/fellowship hour after the Church service. The congregation members were anxious to hear about the various mission projects that the AMAA sponsors around the world.

The AMAA Executive Director congratulated the congregation on its selection of a new Pastor in Rev. Haig Kherlopian. He asked them to lift him up in prayer, support him as the Israelites did with Moses when he was fighting the Amalekites. "Work together, pray together and God will bless your ministry."

On May 26, Rev. Ara Guekuezian invited Levon Filian to give a report about the AMAA at the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church of Fresno, CA. After the worship service, the Church had a Memorial Day picnic. Mr. Filian met with several members of the congregation. He also met with the board members and friends of the Armenian Theological Students' Association (ATSA) and thanked them for this opportunity to share our mission with them and pray that God will bless them abundantly. □



In Paramus - Levon Filian at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ



In Fresno - Seated L to R: Hrant Darakjian, Gail Vartanian, Roseann Saliba. Standing L to R: Kevin Kasper, Ed Saliba, Rev. Ara Guekuezian, Levon Filian



In New York City - Levon Filian with some of the members of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York



In Fresno - L to R: John & Eva Shahinian, Arousiag Messerlian, Levon Filian and Knar Guekuezian

AMA-Australia Sunday Luncheon

Raises Funds for Syria Relief

Lucy Aroyan

The Armenian Missionary Association of Australia (AMA-Australia) actively continues its Sponsorship Program with 42 children currently being sponsored in Armenia and 23 students in Lebanon.

AMA-Australia recently held its annual AMA-Australia Sunday Worship Service and Luncheon to raise funds for current and future sponsorship programs, as well as for the Syrian Emergency Relief Fund.

This year, AMA-Australia invited Rev. Nerses Balabanian, Pastor of the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco, CA, to conduct a number of Evangelistic services, which were held at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney. His lovely wife, Sevan, joined him on this trip. A large number of church members and guests attended the services which were both inspiring and invigorating. Rev. Balabanian was also the guest speaker at St. Andrew's Uniting Church of Longueville Church Camp, whose minister is Rev. Krikor Youmshajekian, Executive/Advisor of AMA-Australia.

The AMA-Australia Sunday Luncheon was held at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Sydney on April 14 and attended by members and friends of the Armenian Evangelical Church. A short video was presented, demonstrating the AMA-Australia's Sponsorship Program in Armenia, as well as a powerpoint presentation highlighting the work of AMA-Australia since its inception in 2001. This included AMA-Australia's financial support to different appeals and projects through different programs, the most recent being a special support to complete the renovation of the Science Laboratory at the Armenian Evangelical Central



L to R: Rev. Krikor Youmshajekian, Neshan Basmajian, Principal of Hamazkaine Arshak & Sophie Galstaun School and Rev. Nerses Balabanian



Rev. Nerses Balabanian

High School in Ashrafieh, Beirut, Lebanon. At the end of these presentations, a special appeal was made to raise funds for the Syrian Emergency Relief Fund. It was a very successful event and much needed funds were raised.

During his short stay in Sydney, Rev. Balabanian, accompanied by Rev. Youmshajekian, visited the Hamazkaine Arshak & Sophie Galstaun School and met with the new Principal Neshan Basmajian. They also visited the AGBU Alexander Primary School in Sydney.

We praise the Lord for His blessings and feel privileged and honored to have Rev. Balabanian join us during these significant and special events of the AMA-Australia. □

Avedisian School Update

A picture is worth a 1000 words! Here are some pictures that speak volumes on the progress made on the construction of the Avedisian School in Yerevan. With the generous donation made by Charles and Doreen Bilezikian toward the construction of the Elementary School, the AMAA Board commissioned the Construction Committee to build a school that would house students from KG to 12th grade. The construction team gives us the assurance that the School will open its doors for full operation in September 2014.

We are pleased to announce that the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is partnering with the AMAA Avedisian School with a donation of \$50,000 to provide the energy efficiency project for a LEED Certificate School, the first in Armenia.

Please join us and become a partner in this mission field by making your financial contribution, with naming opportunities listed below. You can also make a contribution in any amount toward the Endowment Fund of \$2.1 million for the operating expenses of this wonderful award-winning School.

Teachers' Rooms — \$15,000

Offices — \$15,000

Nurse's Room — \$20,000

Classrooms — \$35,000

Science Labs — \$50,000

Kitchen — \$125,000

Soccer Field — \$125,000

Gymnasium — \$300,000

Please contact the AMAA office by visiting our website at www.amaa.org or by calling us at 201-265-2607.



Orphanages in Armenia Benefit From Haig Boyadjian's Last Will and Testament

Gabrielle Worley

The late Haig Boyadjian of Mahwah, NJ was an active supporter and a generous donor to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). For many years he helped the AMAA spread joy to Armenian children through his support of the AMAA camp programs in Armenia.

Haig passed away in 2012. He allocated \$70,000 of his Will for orphanages in Armenia. Former AMAA Board member Lucy Janjigian, Haig's sister, with the help of the AMAA Yerevan office and AMAA Armenia Representative, Harout Nercessian, chose five orphanages to be the beneficiaries of her brother's donation.

1 Missionaries of Charity Armenian Branch — a charity organization founded and run by the Sisters of Mother Teresa. This organization was established in the town of Spitak in 2002 to take care of children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. Currently, the organization houses 22 beneficiaries who receive food, care and physical and musical therapies. The Missionaries of Charity received a donation of \$3,000 to pay for the installation of new doors and windows for the Center.

2 Gyumri Boarding School — founded in 2007, houses 105 poor children, half of whom are orphans. The School received \$10,000 which was used to buy new bedding for 110 beds and new winter coats and boots for all the children. The bedding was in such poor condition that the Minister of Social Affairs personally asked the AMAA to help. Winters in Gyumri are very cold and the children were very thankful to receive the gift of warmth this Christmas.

3 Warm Hearts Home for the Disabled — a home for adults with special needs. Warm Hearts will use its \$7,000 donation to repair the building's sewage system, change the doors, repair walls and buy food and hygienic supplies for two months. Currently, twelve adults live in this home together like a family, eating meals, socializing and making beautiful crafts. Without the Warm Hearts Home, these disabled individuals, who are abandoned by their families, would be living on the streets or passing their days in cold institutions. Thanks to donations like this, Warm Hearts can provide people in need with a warm family environment, companionship and enriching activities.

4 Mary Izmirlyan Orphanage — serves the disabled community housing 95 children with mental and physical handicaps who have been left without parental care. The Home has received \$10,000 to install a hot water system.

5 Children's Support Center — this Center, which serves the largest number of beneficiaries, received \$40,000 in donations. In the past year, over 800 children and teens benefited from the Center's programs: the prevention of child poverty program, hotline helpline, child protection network, foster care, juvenile justice, and crisis intervention and shelter program. Currently, the Center houses 250 children, ages 3-18, who are homeless, come from abusive homes or are in trouble for delinquent behavior. The donation will be used to rehabilitate the building where the youngest children live. The building was first designed as a medical facility and consists of many bathrooms but little space for bedrooms and no play area for the children. Haig's donation will bring warmth, color and a joyful play area to the Center's youngest beneficiaries. The roof, walls and bathrooms will be repaired and new equipment and furniture will be purchased. Rooms will be redesigned to provide a comfortable living and play space for the increasing number of children living in the home.

These gifts, donated from Haig Boyadjian's Will, will be in the names of the members of the Janjigian family — Denise Janjigian, Rick, Zachary, Alexander, Hilary and Jordan Colbeth, Mark, Charles, Jake, Brenna, Morgan, Nina, Livia and Sage Janjigian.

Thanks to this very generous gift, hundreds of disadvantaged children and disabled individuals will be able to live more comfort-



New doors being installed at Missionaries of Charity Armenian Branch run by the Sisters of Mother Teresa.



Sewage system being built at Warm Hearts Home for Disabled.



New bedding at Gyumri Boarding School.

ably; children will walk through the snow with warm feet, be able to take a hot shower at the end of the day, fall asleep in a cozy bed, and have a place to play and eat with the unique families that they create in these homes.

The staff and beneficiaries of these five institutions thank God for the kindness of the Boyajian and Janjigian families and look forward to seeing the joyful smiles that these gifts will bring. □

AMAA 5th Medical Mission Team Commissioned at UACC

A group of 22 physicians, medical professionals, and volunteers from the East and West Coasts, led by Dr. Albert Phillips and his wife Susan, will be on their 5th Medical Mission trip to Armenia from June 13-23. Sponsored by the Armenian Missionary Association of America, the team provides free medical exams and medications for over 500 patients each summer. As in past years, they will set up and staff medical clinics at the Evangelical Churches in Vanadzor and Stepanavan. The group will also have a chance to tour some of the major historical and spiritual sites in Armenia.

On Sunday, June 9, some of the members of the team who live on the West Coast attended a special commissioning service at the United Armenian Congregational Church in Los Angeles, CA.

All donations to this program are used for supplies and medications, while volunteers pay for all their own travel and lodging expenses.



Easter Celebrations in Armenia & Karabagh

"If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:14

AMAA-Armenia, with the cooperation of the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA), once again proclaimed the Easter message throughout Armenia and Karabagh by organizing special Easter activities and programs. Over 5,400 children and teens and their families participated in these programs in 46 towns and villages. The participants were from the Sunday Schools, Sponsorship Programs, arts and crafts and tutorial groups that are sponsored by the AMAA.

The Christian workers, who are mostly volunteers, made a great effort and did their best to prepare these Easter activities. The theme was the same in all AMAA and ECA centers and churches, however, each differed with its unique, interesting, colorful and joyful programs and decorations. In most places the children received decorated and colored Easter eggs and other goodies, while the Christian workers explained the meaning of Easter and the colored eggs. In many towns and villages, the Easter message was proclaimed through dramas, songs, games and various art forms which inspired and educated the audience.

Gyumri

In Gyumri, the Easter Program was held on April 4 with an Easter drama called "Suicide Boat." The story is about a boat with six passengers who have sins in their hearts. When the boat starts its journey, the captain tells them that it is a one way journey and that one of the passengers will not reach the destination. There was a young sailor on the boat. All the passengers wanted this sailor to be the one who would not reach the destination. But this boy was sinless. When a storm starts, all the passengers panic. The young sailor offers his life to save the others. When all was quiet, they notice that they were all alive because of the young sailor. Frightened, they bow their heads. Soon an angel appears telling them, "Why do

you seek the living among the dead?" All those who attended the program were blessed with the message of resurrection.

Ijevan

The Easter Program took place at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Ijevan on March 31. The Sunday school students participated in the performance and played their roles with love and devotion. The performance was about the great escape of Michael and his mother during the 1915 Genocide. During those tragic events, the mother passes her faith and the Holy Bible to her son, Michael. The second part of the drama represented the present time, where Michael's grandchild passes his faith, which he inherited from his grandfather, to his family especially to his mother who was not a Christian. His mother, after learning about the good news of resurrection, becomes a Christian. The performance was accepted by the audience with much applause and words of thanks.

Ashtarak

The theme of the Easter performance at Ashtarak was "One Nation, One Belief." The first part represented today's youth, who are guided by the following principle: "Secure their own comfort rather than help their country." The theme of the second part was "One Nation, One Belief," where several middle-aged intelligent people are struggling to keep their Armenian Christian faith by telling stories about their Armenian history and Christian heritage. The third part represented the coalition of these images in victorious national dances. The performance ended with a question to the audience, asking if they will accept the resurrected Christ or not. The aim of this performance was to show how important and dear is our Armenian Christian heritage and history.



Easter Celebration in Gyumri



Children singing at the Easter Celebration in Goris

Vanadzor

In Vanadzor, the children's Easter Program took place on March 31. Members of the Christian Education Department, the children's choir, the National Dance Ensemble and the theatrical group of the church organized the Easter program which was attended by more than 500 people. The theatrical group presented "The Narcissus and the Tulip" play which was received with great joy and enthusiasm. The Vanadzor Church also presented a special Easter program for the disabled children. Easter worship and holiday events were organized in the Armenian Evangelical Church in the village of Shirakamut near Vanadzor.

Yerevan

In Yerevan, the AMAA's and ECA's "Hayasa" theatrical group presented a play entitled "The Traditions of Our Street," which was held at the AMAA Center on Baghramian Street on April 4 and 5. The play, staged and directed by Nouné Abrahamyan, was based on a novel written by the Egyptian writer Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz. It's the story of a young man whose life reminds us of Jesus' earthly life. The street where the young man lived is the world surrounding us, where different kinds of people live, who know about Jesus and His deeds, but they go on committing sins and consider material values more important than the spiritual. They don't admit Christ's messages and prefer to live in the dark. But if they want to consider themselves Christians and Jesus' followers, they should be guided by His messages. The lesson of the performance was to live in Christ's love and accept Him as our Savior. The performance was very professional and impressed the audience tremendously.

All of the Easter activities in Armenia and Karabagh proclaimed the Easter message of divine love, hope and eternal life in the risen Jesus Christ to children in ways that they understand. Our hope and prayer is that the Easter message of eternal life will touch and change the hearts of the thousands who heard it, and will bring hope to our Armenian nation that is trying to resuscitate from many long years of pain and suffering. □



Easter Celebration in Vanadzor



Easter Celebration in Vardenis



"Hayasa" theatrical group of Yerevan with Artistic Director Nouné Abrahamyan (front row, second from right) and AMAA Armenia Representative Harout Nercessian (front row, middle)

AMAA Armenia Partners with UNDP

Gabrielle Worley

Unemployment is one of Armenia's most serious socio-economic problems, especially among College graduates.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the most difficult youth unemployment situation among CIS countries is in Armenia, where the youth unemployment rate is currently about 39 percent. Many of Armenia's brightest young adults, those who Armenia needs most in order to build a better future, are leaving Armenia to work and live in countries with better economies and job opportunities. In order to combat this critical problem, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has partnered with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to implement the Youth Career Project (YCT). This year, the AMAA provided funding for 60 university graduates, who have been unemployed for at least one year, with a six month paid internship. The Program brings together unemployed graduates and potential employers with the aim of facilitating the transition of recent graduates into the workforce.

AMAA's Armenia Representative Harout Nercessian, stated that "The AMAA and UNDP have developed a working relationship over the last two years as they share common concerns regarding the economic conditions in Armenia. Both organizations are concerned about youth unemployment which has resulted in the exodus of youth from Armenia. This YCT program will help keep our youth in Armenia."

From 2007-2009, UNDP Armenia implemented the first three rounds of the YCT initiative. It quickly became very popular and of high demand among both the university students and employers. Some 118 recent graduates passed the YCT internship in Yerevan and six regions of Armenia and over 50% of the interns were offered permanent employment by the host organization at the end of their internships.

The AMAA partnered with UNDP in implementing the fourth round of YCT. The relationship between the AMAA and UNDP began when AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian met Dafina Gercheva, Director of UNDP Armenia and her assistant Armen Baibourtian, in New York in early 2011. Mr. Filian and Mr. Nercessian met with them again in Yerevan in May 2011. On September 17, 2012, the AMAA and UNDP signed an agreement to join forces to implement YCT.

This year, YCT received over 1,000 applications from 400 young graduates for the program's listed internship positions. 29 employers announced 109 internship positions. 50% of the interns are female, 30% are from rural communities and 15% are Syrian Armenians. After only one month into the Program, two of the interns were offered permanent positions and hired by the company "Good Credit" as a company teller and a loan specialist.

All interns are also invited to participate in seminars at the AMAA's "Jinishian Life Skills Resource Center." Here the students get a chance to enhance their life skills through seminars and activities which aim to help them develop a vision and mission

Chekijian Hall Dedicated at AMAA Center in Yerevan

The AMAA is pleased to announce that on March 18, we dedicated the Church Hall in Yerevan, Armenia. Sam Chekijian, a dear friend of the AMAA, was very pleased to participate in this event. The Hall was dedicated in memory of Sam's parents Youhanna and Mary Chekijian.



Present at the dedication were L to R: Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, AMAA Pastor to Pastors, Harout Nercessian, AMAA Armenia Representative, Sam Chekijian, and Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director.



for their lives and acquire the skills and motivation which are necessary to achieve those goals. Currently, about 15 of the YCT interns are active participants in the 6-month "Life Skill School" program at the Jinishian Center. UNDP Armenia and the AMAA look forward to seeing many more of their interns hired for permanent employment after the internships end in a few months.

The AMAA and UNDP are also cooperating in the construction of the new Avedisian School in regards to meeting the special ecological standards of the building.

The AMAA appreciates its partnership with UNDP Armenia for the development and growth of the fatherland. □

Official Call to the 94th Annual Meeting Of the Armenian Missionary Association of America

The 94th Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. at the Armenian Memorial Church, 32 Bigelow Avenue, Watertown, MA. All members of the AMAA are invited to attend the Meeting to:

- I. Consider and approve the reports of the Officers, Committees, Chapters and Affiliated Boards of the Association for the fiscal year 2012-2013;
- II. Review the financial reports for the fiscal year 2012-2013;
- III. Announce the names of the newly elected Board members;
- IV. Elect members to the Nominating Committee;
- V. Elect an Auditor; and
- VI. Consider and address any other business that may come before the membership.

PROGRAM OF THE 94th ANNUAL MEETING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Friday, October 11 at the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, MA

9:30 amArmenian Evangelical World Council Meeting
12:00 pmLunch
2:00 pmSeminar/Workshop - TBD
6:00 pmDinner
7:00 pmAMAA Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, October 12 at the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, MA

9:30 am94th Annual Meeting
12:30 pmLunch
1:30 pmAMAA Board of Directors Meeting (Short Session)

Saturday, October 12 at The Westin Waltham Boston, Waltham, MA

6:00 pmReception
6:30 pmDinner
7:45 pmConcert featuring Grace Kelly, award winning saxophonist, singer, songwriter, composer/arranger, from Brookline, MA.

Sunday, October 13 at the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, MA

11:00 am94th Annual Meeting Worship Service and Installation of AMAA Officers

The situation in Syria is getting worse every day

...especially for Armenians in Aleppo.

Did You Know?

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Մայրերու Օրուայ Առթիւ

Հոգեւոր Ազդեցութիւն Ու Նենալ

Վեր. Դոկտ. Աւետիս Պոյնէրեան*

«Դուն հաստատո՛ւն կեցիր այն բաներուն մէջ որոնք սորվեցար ու որոնց հաւատացիր, վասն զի գիտես թէ որմէ՛ սորված ես: Քու մանկութենէդ ի վեր սուրբ գիրքերը գիտես, որոնք կրնան իմաստուն ընել քեզ փրկուելու Քրիստոս Յիսուսի վրայ եղած հաւատքովը:» (Բ. Տիմոթէոս 3:14-15)

«Մայրերու Օր»ուան առիթով կը պատուենք մեր մայրերը որովհետեւ Աստուած կը պատուիրէ մեզի, որ պատուենք զանոնք, եւ նաեւ որովհետեւ մեր մայրերը պատուրուելու արժանի են՝ անոնց ցուցաբերած անսակարկ սիրոյն, անգնահատելի զոհողութեան, եւ մանաւանդ՝ իրենց զաւակներուն վրայ իրենց ունեցած հոգեւոր ազդեցութեան համար:

Մայրեր մեծ ազդեցութիւն ունին իրենց զաւակներուն վրայ: Ամերիկացի բանաստեղծ Բալֆ Ուալտո Էմէրսոն մայրերու ազդեցութեան մասին ըսած է. «Մարդեր այն են՝ ի՛նչ որ անոնց մայրերը կ'ընեն զիրենք»: Ամերիկայի մեծ նախագահ Աբրահամ Լինքոլն իր մօր ազդեցութեան մասին ըսած է. «Աստուած օրհնէ՛ իմ մայրս, ամէն ինչ որ եմ եւ կը յուսամ ըլլալ՝ մօրս կը պարտիմ»:

Մենք, որպէս ժողովուրդ, եղած ենք մայրասէր, որովհետեւ կանուխէն հասկցած ու բարձր գնահատած ենք մօր մը՝ մայր ըլլալու բացառիկ հանգամանքն ու կոչումը, դերն ու ազդեցութիւնը որ անոնք ունին իրենց զաւակներուն, ընտանիքին եւ ընկերութեան վրայ: Ունեցած ենք բազմաթիւ բանաստեղծներ, որոնք գովերգած են մօր տիպարն ու արժէքը, սէրն ու անփոխարինելիութիւնը: Անոնցմէ կը յիշենք Յովհաննէս Ծիրազը, որ՝ իր «Յուշարձան Մայրիկիս» գրքովին մէջ այսպէս կը ջատագովէ մայրը. «Մեր յոյսի դուռն է մայրս. Մեր տան մատուռն է մայրս. Մեր օրօրոցն է մայրս. Մեր տան ամրոցն է մայրս»:

Իսկապէ՛ս մեծ է այն դերն ու ազդեցութիւնը որ մայր մը ունի մեր ընտանեկան, եկեղեցական, ազգային եւ հասարակական կեանքին մէջ: «Այն ձեռքերը, որոնք օրօրոցը կը շարժեն, աշխարհը կը շարժեն» խօսքը խորիմաստ է որովհետեւ. –

- մայրն է մանուկին եւ երեխային նկարագիրը կերտողը,
- մայրն է առաջին եւ մեծագոյն դաստիարակը մանուկին ու երեխային կեանքի առաջին դպրոցին, եւ
- մայրն է առաւելաբար իր զաւակին ճակատագրին, ինչպէս եւ մարդկութեան ճակատագիրը որոշողը, որուն քանդածը դիրքին չէ շինել, եւ շինածը՝ դժուար է

քանդել: Մանկավարժներ ըսած են. «Տուէք ձեր մանուկները մեզի մինչեւ իրենց եօթը տարիքը եւ մենք վերադարձնենք ձեզի ապագայի մարդը»:

«Մայրերու Օր»ը որքան ալ շատերու համար ըլլայ ուրախ օր մը, տակաւին՝ ոմանց համար տխուր օր մըն է որովհետեւ անոնց մայրերը մահացած են:

Իսկ ուրիշներ թերեւս չունեցան սիրող եւ հոգացող մայրեր: Ուրիշ մայրեր նորածին զաւակ մը կորսնցուցին, կամ կարգ մը մայրեր կանուխէն իրենց ամուսինը կորսնցուցին:

Մեր այսօրուայ Սուրբ Գրային համարները (Բ. Տիմոթէոս 3:14-15) մեզի ցոյց կուտան թէ մայր մը ի՛նչպէս կրնայ հոգեւոր ազդեցութիւն ունենալ իր զաւակին վրայ:

Ա. Մայր մը կրնայ հոգեւոր ազդեցութիւն ունենալ իր զաւակին վրայ՝ երբ կը ծանօթացնէ իր զաւակը Աստուծոյ Խօսքին: Պօղոս առաքեալ Տիմոթէոսի այսպէս կը պատուիրէ. «Հաստատո՛ւն կեցիր այն բաներուն մէջ որոնք սորվեցար ու որոնց հաւատացիր, վասն զի գիտես թէ որմէ՛ սորված ես»: Տիմոթէոսի մեծ մայրը Լաւոդիա եւ մայրը Եւնիկէ առաջին անգամ ծանօթացուցին զինք Աստուծոյ Խօսքին: Անոնք ո՛չ միայն սորվեցուցին անոր Աստուծոյ Խօսքը, այլեւ՝ ապրեցան Աստուծոյ Խօսքը:

Սուրբ Գիրքի չորս թարգմանիչներ կը խօսակցէին իրենց նախասիրած Սուրբ Գիրքի թարգմանութիւններուն մասին: Առաջինը ըսաւ թէ ինք կը նախընտրէր Սուրբ Գիրքին այսինչ թարգմանութիւնը: Երկրորդը յայտնեց թէ ինք ինչո՞ր կը նախընտրէր Սուրբ Գիրքին այնինչ թարգմանութիւնը: Երրորդը շեշտով մը ըսաւ թէ ինք կը նախընտրէր Սուրբ Գիրքին ուրիշ մէկ թարգմանութիւնը: Մի քանի վայրկեան լռութենէ մը յետոյ, չորրորդը ըսաւ.



«Անձնապէս կը նախընտրեմ իմ մօրս թարգմանութիւնը»: Երբ միւս երեք թարգմանիչները սկսան խնդալ, ան ըսաւ. «Այո, իմ մայրս թարգմանեց Սուրբ Գիրքը: Իմ մայրս Սուրբ Գիրքին իւրաքանչիւր էջը կեանքի թարգմանեց: Մօրս թարգմանութիւնը ամենէն համոզիչ թարգմանութիւնն է»:

Մայրե՛ր, երբե՛ք կանուխ չէ եւ ո՛չ ալ ուշ է ծանօթացնելու ձեր զաւակը Աստուծոյ Խօսքին: Ուրիշ ո՛չ մէկ անձ կամ ուրիշ որեւէ բան կրնայ փոխարինել ձեր հոգեւոր ազդեցութիւնը՝ ձեր զաւակին կեանքին վրայ:

Բ. Մայր մը կրնայ հոգեւոր ազդեցութիւն ունենալ իր զաւակին վրայ՝ երբ կ'առաջնորդէ իր զաւակը քրիստոնէական ճշմարիտ հաւատքի: Պօղոս առաքեալ Տիմոթէոսի կը յիշեցնէ. «Քու մանկութենէդ ի վեր սուրբ գիրքերը գիտես, որոնք կրնան իմաստուն ընել քեզ փրկուելու Քրիստոս Յիսուսի վրայ եղած հաւատքովը»: Տիմոթէոսի մեծ մայրը Լաւողիա եւ մայրը Եւնիկէ առաջնորդեցին զինք քրիստոնէական ճշմարիտ հաւատքի: Անոնք ո՛չ միայն առաջնորդեցին զինք քրիստոնէական հաւատքի, այլեւ՝ ապրեցան այդ հաւատքը:

Հոգեւոր հովիւ մը երկար խօսակցութիւն մը կ'ունենայ երիտասարդի մը հետ որ կը փափաքէր եկեղեցիին անդամակցիլ: Խօսակցութեան աւարտին, երիտասարդը չայտնեց հովիւին, թէ՛ պատրաստ էր եկեղեցիին անդամակցելու: Հովիւը, որ՝ կը փափաքէր գիտնալ երիտասարդին եկեղեցիին անդամակցելու պատճառը, հարցուց անոր. «Իմ ո՞ր ըսածս քեզ համոզեց որ եկեղեցիին անդամակցիս»: Երիտասարդը պատասխանեց.

«Ձեր ըսած խօսքերէն ո՛չ մէկը զիս համոզեց, այլ՝ մօրս ապրած կեանքն էր որ զիս համոզեց»:

Մայրե՛ր, երբե՛ք կանուխ չէ եւ ո՛չ ալ ուշ է առաջնորդելու ձեր զաւակը քրիստոնէական ճշմարիտ հաւատքի: Ուրիշ ո՛չ մէկ անձ կամ ուրիշ որեւէ բան կրնայ փոխարինել ձեր հոգեւոր ազդեցութիւնը՝ ձեր զաւակին կեանքին վրայ:

Որովհետեւ Տիմոթէոսի մեծ մայրը Լաւողիա եւ մայրը Եւնիկէ ծանօթացուցին զինք Աստուծոյ Խօսքին եւ առաջնորդեցին զինք քրիստոնէական ճշմարիտ հաւատքի, ան դարձաւ հաւատարիմ ու քաջ հոգեւոր հովիւ եւ առաջնորդ մը, դարձաւ Պօղոս առաքեալի ամենէն հաւատարիմ գործակիցներէն մէկը, վայելեց քրիստոնէական բարի համբաւ եւ ունեցաւ հոգեւոր մեծ ազդեցութիւն իր եկեղեցիին եւ միջավայրին վրայ:

Այսօր, ուրիշ որեւէ ժամանակէ աւելի, պէտք ունինք Տիմոթէոսի մեծ մօր եւ մօր նման մայրերու, որպէս զի անոնք ծանօթացնեն իրենց զաւակները Աստուծոյ Խօսքին եւ առաջնորդեն զանոնք քրիստոնէական ճշմարիտ հաւատքի, որպէս զի եկեղեցիները եւ մենք ունենանք Տիմոթէոսի նման հոգեւոր հովիւներ եւ աշխարհականներ, որոնք պիտի վայելեն քրիստոնէական բարի համբաւ եւ ունենան հոգեւոր մեծ ազդեցութիւն իրենց ընտանիքին, եկեղեցիին եւ միջավայրին վրայ: □

* Վեր. Դոկտ. Աւետիս Պոյնէրեան Հովիւն է Ուոթըրթաունի (Մէսէչուսէց) Հայ Նահատակաց Եկեղեցիին

JAMES G. JAMESON ESSAY CONTEST OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) is pleased to sponsor the James G. Jameson Essay Contest once again this year. The James G. Jameson Essay Contest was established to encourage High School and College students of Armenian descent to express how their Armenian heritage has been meaningful in their lives. Topics should touch upon some aspect of Armenian heritage such as religion, literature, language, culture, geography, history or the economy.

Awards will be made in two categories: high school students and college/university students. The deadline for entries is September 30, 2013.

All Armenian or part-Armenian students from North America are eligible. Only unpublished entries will be accepted. The winner in each category will be awarded \$500.00, provided from the income of a special fund established by Mr. and Mrs. James G. Jameson of Brookline, MA.

The essays should be written in English and have a length of 1,000 to 2,000 words. A contestant is allowed no more than one entry per year, and only one member of a family may receive an award in a five-year period. If no submitted essay is considered sufficiently meritorious, no award will be granted that year.

Entries and/or inquiries should be directed to: James G. Jameson Essay Contest, c/o of The Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Road, Paramus NJ 07652.

Araxie Abdulian

Araxie Abdulian passed away on June 7, 2012 in Los Angeles, CA at the age of 91.

Born in Kessab, Syria to Hovhanness and Martha Churukian-Abdulian, she attended the local Armenian Evangelical School and was a bright and inquisitive student who found great joy singing in the Church choir. After graduation Araxie attended the Armenian Evangelical School in Beirut but her education was interrupted when she fell ill with Pott's disease, a form of tuberculosis that affects the spine.

The family suffered a great tragedy in 1940, when their mother, Martha, passed away suddenly. Araxie took on her mother's responsibilities which proved to be difficult and challenging due to her own illness. After undergoing many surgical procedures in the 1950s to fix her back and with the advancement of medicines, Araxie was cured.

In 1969 she moved from Beirut to Los Angeles with her younger sister, Mary. She worked in her brother Daniel's medical office for many years. In her later years, Araxie's mental health began to deteriorate slowly but her faith remained strong. She would recite passages from the Bible and poems she had learned growing up in Kessab. She would sing hymns and often ask her visitors to sing with her. The spirit of the Lord truly lived in her.

Araxie is survived by her brothers, Daniel, Vasken, Misak, and Hrair, sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews. The family suggests that memorials be sent to the AMAA in care of the Araxie and Mary Abdulian Memorial Fund. □



Mary Abdulian

Mary Abdulian passed away on August 1, 2012 in Los Angeles, CA at the age of 80.

She was born in Kessab, Syria, the sixth child of Hovhannes Abdulian and Martha Churukian-Abdulian. Her childhood with family and friends was idyllic and the simple village life was precious to her. The passing of her mother at an early age gave Mary a strength and resilience that would remain with her all of her life.

Mary attended the Kessab Armenian Evangelical School. In 1948, the acclaimed Armenian conductor, Parsegh Ganajian, visited Kessab and formed a choir. To her delight, Mary was chosen to be part of the choir.



After graduation, she attended the American Girls' High School in Aleppo and the American Girls' High School in Beirut. She continued her education at the Beirut College for Women, now known as the Lebanese American University, where she received her associate degree in bookkeeping. She was hired at Haigazian College, now Haigazian University, as a bookkeeper and enjoyed this position for many years. During this time she lived with her siblings, Araxie, and Misak who was attending medical school at the American University of Beirut. In 1969, she and her sister immigrated to Los Angeles to be with their family. Her first job in LA was as a bookkeeper at Earl Scheib Auto Paint Company and her second job was at the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, where she worked for many years until she became the caregiver for her sister, Araxie.

Mary is survived by her brothers, Daniel, Vasken, Misak, and Hrair, sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews. The family suggests that memorials be sent to the AMAA in care of the Araxie and Mary Abdulian Memorial Fund. □

Grace Norian Bakamjian

Grace Norian Bakamjian passed away on January 28, 2013 in Tulsa, OK at the age of 82. She and her husband, Barkev, were longtime supporters of the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

Grace was born in North Bergen, NJ, the youngest daughter of Jay and Merin Norian, survivors of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey during World War I. She began piano study as a young child and studied at Tanglewood, summer home of the Boston Symphony. She lived and taught piano in several states before moving to Tulsa. Grace nurtured many young Tulsans to high levels of achievement at the keyboard while active as a leader in several local music and arts organizations. She was also a beacon for Tulsa's small yet passionate Armenian-American community, which she nourished with kufte (meat and grain dish), Kahke (braided rolls) and bacheeks (kisses).

Grace and Barkev were instrumental in starting a Unitarian-Universalist fellowship in Connecticut, and they were longtime members of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa.

She was preceded in death by her parents; Barkev, her husband of 54 years, and her sisters Elizabeth Mouradian, Lillian Moranian and Sona Najarian. She is survived by her sisters Siran Birbas of Shelton, CT, and Mary Ayvasian of Lexington, MA; sons Ted Bakamjian and his wife Emily Duensing



of Tulsa; Tim Bakamjian and his wife Ann Gaebe of Tulsa, and David Bakamjian and his wife Ronda Brands of New York, NY, grandsons Josh Parish and Jeff Bakamjian, and granddaughter Allison Bakamjian.

A memorial service was held March 2 at All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa. Memorial donations may be made to the AMAA, All Souls Church (allsoulschurch.org), Tulsa Camerata (tulsacamerata.org), or the Saint Simeon's Foundation (saintsimeons.org). □

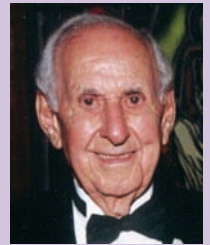
Avedis Paul Bogosian

Avedis Paul Bogosian, a long-time supporter of the AMAA, passed away on February 9, 2013 in Fresno, CA. He was 96.

Born in Lawrence, MA, he moved to CA with his family as a young man. He served in World War II and the Korean War. Following his military service, Paul was employed as a Civil Engineer with Cal Trans until his retirement. He was an avid tennis player and played the sport well into his 80s.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years Heron; son Philip; daughters Karen Jaramishian, Linda Googooian and Diane Bognosian; and eight grandchildren.

A funeral service was held at the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, CA on February 15. Memorial donations may be made to the Avedis Paul Bogosian Endowment Fund at the Armenian Missionary Association of America or to the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. □

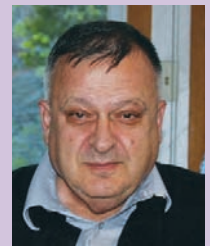


Isaac Hagop Hagopian

Isaac (Isahag) Hagop Hagopian of Waltham, MA, passed away on April 19, 2013. He was 73.

Born in Amman, Jordan to Hagop and Jamileh Nuyujukian Hagopian, he lived in Amman until his early twenties, receiving his primary and secondary education at Jordanian government schools. He moved to Kuwait for a year, worked for an airline, saved his money, and moved to Boston because his uncle had moved to Arlington with his young family just a year earlier. Isaac graduated from Bentley College with a degree in accounting.

In 1968 his mother told him his father wasn't well and wanted him to marry before



he passed away. Ever the obedient son, while on summer break from his studies, he traveled to Beirut to ask Jessy Nuyujukian to marry him. They were married on September 16, 1968 and soon after the wedding came to the US. His father died four months later. This "arranged" marriage lasted 44 years, 7 months, and 3 days.

Isaac was a solid, Christian man. In his final years he wanted to be in church more often but his deteriorating physical condition limited his mobility. He loved having his wife at his side but never stopped her from attending worship services and Bible studies—a clear indication of the importance he placed in her spiritual nourishment. Ultimately, it provided an even greater blessing to him as she was his constant, unfailing, primary caregiver.

Isaac is survived by his wife Jessy; daughters Jane Rita Duprey and her husband Jack of Stow, MA and Tanya Jessie Howard and her husband Wayne of Longmont, CO; sons Hagop of Waltham, MA and Gregory Paul of Watertown, MA; grandchildren David, Lily and Brayden Duprey and Alexander and Lara Howard; sister Lucy Sahagian and her husband Vartan of Paramus, NJ; and brother Barkev Hagopian and his wife Azadouhie of Reseda, CA.

Funeral services were held at the First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA on April 24. □

Alexander Ishkanian

Alexander Ishkanian passed away on December 19, 2012 in Paramus, NJ at the age of 86. He was the son of the late Dr. Nouri Ishkanian, who served as President of the AMAA from 1944 to 1946.



Alexander was a football fan from an early age, being voted most athletic at Memorial High School in West New York while playing on their football team. A WWII veteran, he served overseas in the Navy Seabees. He enjoyed several professions during his life including a photoengraver, a real estate agent and appraiser. He was a member of the Knights Templar Masonic Lodge for over 50 years and was honored in 2012, along with his wife Alice, for his many years of service to the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, a church he truly loved.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Alice, children, Matthew, Alex and the late Mark Ishkanian; brother Ara; cousin Grace Bedrosian and five nephews.

A funeral service was held at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus on December 23, 2012. □

Arthur Kuljian

Arthur Kuljian, a Penn Valley, PA resident, passed away on March 19, 2013 at the age of 89. His family has been active in the AMAA for many years.



Born in Boston, MA, Arthur was the son of Harry and Alice Kuljian. In addition to serving in the military during WWII, he graduated from MIT with a BS degree in mechanical and electrical engineering. He joined The Kuljian Corporation, a large engineering and construction management firm founded by his father, and started a career which saw him rise to CEO. Under his leadership, the firm broadened its technology base, established new markets and formed alliances with numerous American and foreign multi-national giants. The firm's collaboration with Korean giant Hyundai was a showcase example of American-Asian business success as the two firms designed and constructed many infrastructure projects such as power plants which created thousands of jobs in both countries. He was a key speaker at many international conferences on the vital role of electric power in developing nations.

One of Arthur's unique talents was his ability to balance business and family interests. As his four children will attest, their dad rarely missed a birthday, graduation, or other important events in their lives and they treasure to this day the exciting gifts he gave them from his international travels. Arthur was active in his church and gave generously of his time to numerous charitable and civic organizations in the Philadelphia area.

Arthur is survived by his wife, Lucille, his children, Arthur H. Jr., Richard, Elizabeth Rothman and Gordon; eight grandchildren, and his brother, Edward.

Funeral services were held on March 23 at the Ardmore United Methodist Church in Ardmore, PA. □

Diana Melkonian Gross

Diana Melkonian Gross of Cliffside Park, NJ, formerly of Stamford, CT and Manhasset, NY, died on April 10, 2013 at the age of 87. She was recently widowed from her husband John E. Gross, who passed away on January 15.



Diana was born in New York City to Mihran and Sirpoohi Melkonian, who had

emigrated from Turkey. She was a school teacher with the Port Washington, NY public school district. After graduating with a BA from New York University, she also earned two masters degrees, one from New York University and one from Adelphi University.

She married Robert Telfeyan, an importer of oriental rugs, and raised three children, Laurel, Robert Donald and Celeste. She and Robert were the Sunday school superintendents at the Congregational Church in Manhasset, NY.

Diana married her second husband, John E. Gross, in 1975. They were avid travelers, visiting numerous countries on every continent, and lived for a time in Saudi Arabia. When they moved back to the states, they settled in Stamford, CT, and later moved to Cliffside Park, NJ to be closer to her children.

Diana is survived by her children, Laurel Tischelman and her husband Harold, R. Donald Telfeyan, and Dr. Celeste Telfeyan Helvacian and her husband Nurhan, AMAA Board member, and three grandchildren, Cristina Demirdjian, Linda Helvacian and Alana Tischelman.

A memorial service was held at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus NJ. The family suggests that memorials be sent to the Armenian Missionary Association of America or to the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ. □

Correction: *The date of Margaret Hartunian's passing was incorrectly reported as November 8, 2012 in her obituary in the Sept/Oct/Nov/Dec 2012 issue of the AMAA News. Margaret passed away on November 4, 2012. We sincerely apologize for this error.*

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff also wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA NEWS.

Sarkis Darakjian

Ontario, Canada

Robert Vartan Haig

Los Angeles, CA

* **Christine Joulakian**

Montrose, CA

* **George Khosroffian**

Silver Spring, MD

* **Lucine Loshkajian**

Springfield, MA

* **Ardson Shegoian**

San Francisco, CA

* *Memorials designated for AMAA*



Armenian Missionary Association of America

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Summer 2013

It's Camp Time in Armenia & Karabagh!

Thousands of children in Armenia and Karabagh look forward to spending their summer at Camp Bedrosian and Camp Sheen Shoghig.

AMAA's camping mission enriches the lives of children spiritually, intellectually and physically.

Campers enjoy leisure time in a wholesome environment created especially for them while they learn about the love of God.

The camps provide nutritional meals, sports, arts and crafts, Bible studies, workshops, and first aid training. The children are also taught Armenian Christian songs and sharagans.

Please help our children have a great summer!
They will never forget your love and the positive impact your gift will make on their young lives.

YES!

I will help children in
Armenia & Karabagh
attend summer camps!

Enclosed is my total gift of \$_____.

I will give _____ child/children one week of overnight camp for \$70 each.

I will give _____ child/children one week of day camp for \$40 each.

Name _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make your tax deductible donation to the AMAA, earmarked for Armenia/Karabagh Summer Camps. **Give your gift today!**

>>>Via Check-mail to: AMAA, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ, 07652 >>>Via Credit/Debit Card-call AMAA: 201-265-2607 >>>Online-visit: amaa.org